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North Dakota Game and Fish Department
Private Lands Section
100 North Bismarck Expressway
Bismarck, ND 58501

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New Law Provides Opportunities for PLOTS Partnerships

What is the Community Match Program?

In 2005 the State Legislature passed a law that gives North Dakota communities an opportunity to partner with the Game and Fish Department and its popular Private Land Open to Sportsmen program.

While the Game and Fish Department is nearing its goal of 1 million acres in the PLOTS program, community representatives occasionally still ask about getting more PLOTS land in their general area.

Those decisions, however, ultimately lie with landowners who have many good reasons for choosing not to enroll in the program.

The new Community Match Program allows groups like chambers of commerce, city councils, wildlife clubs, etc., to create some incentives to encourage local landowners to enroll land in the PLOTS program, with the idea that the community may benefit as more hunters are attracted to the area because of more available PLOTS acres.

How Does It Work?

The Game and Fish Department has more than 2,000 landowners statewide who have enrolled land in the PLOTS program. There are several different programs, each of which provides compensation to the landowner in exchange for allowing public hunting access.

The Community Match Program takes that one step further, allowing communities to provide payments over and above the Game and Fish rate.

How Does a Community Participate?

Any community in the state may participate. Local residents must take the initiative and first identify landowners with qualifying habitat who are interested in participating.

The next step is for Game and Fish biologists to evaluate the land to determine if it

meets the criteria for the PLOTS program. If it does, Game and Fish will offer a standard PLOTS payment and the community group can provide an incentive over and above the Game and Fish rate. If all parties are satisfied with the arrangement, Game and Fish will develop a legal contract.

Lengths and provisions of agreements can vary. If the incentive payment offered by the community group is equal to one-third of the Game and Fish payment – for instance, if the standard rate is \$3/acre and the local group offers a \$1 per acre incentive payment – the community has the option of opening that PLOTS area to hunting by nonresidents during the first week of pheasant season when PLOTS are otherwise closed to nonresidents.

The community and supporting businesses that provide local matching funds will be identified as a partner on a sign located on the PLOTS area.

For More Information

Contact the North Dakota Game and Fish Department at 701-328-6300, or a private land biologist in your area (see back panel).

